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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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09/199,829

11/25/1998

PATRICIA B. SMITH

TI-25250

4119

23494

7590

12/22/2004

TEXAS INSTRUMENTS INCORPORATED

P O BOX 655474, M/S 3999

DALLAS, TX 75265

EXAMINER

MALDONADO, JULIO J

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2823

DATE MAILED: 12/22/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/199,829

Applicant(s)

SMITH ET AL.

Examiner

Julio J. Maldonado

Art Unit

2823

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 October 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 6, 25, 28, 29 and 31 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 6, 25, 28, 29, and 31 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

1. The rejection of claims 1, 6, 25, 28, 29, and 31 as set forth in the Office Action mailed on 10/08/2004 is withdrawn in view of applicants' response.
2. A new rejection is included in this Office Action.
3. Claims 1, 6, 25, 28, 29, and 31 are pending in the present application.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 1, 6, 25, 28, 29, and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Robinson et al. (U.S. 4,201,579).

Robinson et al. (Figs.1-4) teach a related method to remove photoresist layer formed over a device containing a oxygen sensitive material including the steps of forming layer of a first material over a semiconductor substrate, said first material is oxygen sensitive; forming a photoresist layer over said first material; patterning said layer of said first material; removing said photoresist layer after patterning said layer of said first material using a plasma process comprising hydrogen and an inert gas such as argon or nitrogen with no oxidizing component at a temperature of 100°C to 225°C; and continue the plasma process for an over etch time of, for example, 2 minutes, to insure that all the photoresist has been removed (column 2, line 18 – column 4, line 61).

Still, Robinson et al. fail to teach performing the plasma process at a temperature of 150°C to 350°C. However, in the case where the claimed ranges “overlap or lie inside ranges disclosed by the prior art” a prima facie case of obviousness exists. MPEP 2144.05. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the temperature range disclosed in the teachings of Robinson et al. to arrive at the claimed invention.

Furtherstill, Robinson et al. fail to expressly teach removing a residue on said semiconductor wafer after removing said photoresist layer using a plasma process comprising hydrogen or deuterium and substantially no oxygen component at an ambient temperature of 150°C to 350°C. However, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made, that the process described by Robinson et al. removes all of the photoresist, and any residue remaining from any impartial removal of the photoresist layer would also have been removed.

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1, 6, 25, 28, 29, and 31 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to examiner Julio J. Maldonado whose telephone number is (571) 272-1864. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday.

8. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Olik Chaudhuri, can be reached on (571) 272-1855. The fax number for this


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group is 703-872-9306 for before final submissions, 703-872-9306 for after final submissions and the customer service number for group 2800 is (703) 306-3329.

Updates can be found at <http://www.uspto.gov/web/info/2800.htm>.

Julio J. Maldonado
Patent Examiner
Art Unit 2823

Julio J. Maldonado
December 16, 2004



George Fourson
Primary Examiner